

Maryland State Board of Elections

Last Minute Instructions for Election Judges

Challengers and Watchers

Challengers and watchers help provide transparency and accountability during early voting and election day. So be polite and courteous. Whenever possible, help them conduct their observation of your early voting center or polling place. In addition, please review the following important information.

1. Challengers and watchers must have a *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* signed by a candidate, political party, campaign committee, the State Board of Elections or your local board of elections. An original signature on the certificate is not required – a photocopied signature is acceptable.
2. Challengers and watchers must be allowed to enter the early voting center or polling place to observe the opening and closing procedures.
 - a. In the morning, you must allow challengers and watchers to enter to observe beginning when you start setting up. However, if challengers and watchers arrive during the half hour before the polls open, you are not required to allow them to enter.
 - b. In the evening, challengers and watcher who are in the early voting center or polling place may stay and observe **all** of the closing procedures. You are not required to allow entry after the polls close.
3. During opening and closing you should read the seal and tamper tape numbers loud enough for challengers and watchers to hear.
4. Periodically a chief judge shall escort a challenger or watcher to a voting unit that is not being used by a voter for the purpose of verifying the tamper tape and seal numbers.
5. Position challengers and watchers in a location where they can view and hear voters as they check-in to vote. Challengers and watchers are not required to be located behind the check-in table or within view of an electronic pollbook.
6. Challengers and watchers should be provided periodic voter check-in totals from the electronic pollbook.
7. Challengers and watchers are not permitted to comment or question your administration of the polling place. If they have questions or concerns, they should exit the polling place and call the local board office.

Polling Place Evaluators

Polling Place Evaluators may make unannounced visits to your polling place to assess the election judges' compliance with election procedures and their general performance. Evaluators are local Boards of Elections members, staff members, independent contractors, or volunteers. The evaluators are not challengers and watchers. Please cooperate with, and assist the evaluators as they perform their duties.

No Electioneering Zone

Please periodically check outside the polling place to ensure that electioneering activities are not taking place within the no-electioneering zone. If they are, politely instruct the individuals to move outside the zone. If they refuse to do so, please simply go back inside the polling place and call the local board office and inform them of the situation. You are not required nor should you attempt to enforce the no-electioneering rules. Leave that up to the local board office.